

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 281

To require a study and report regarding the construction and designation of a new Interstate from Augusta, Georgia to Natchez, Mississippi.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 6, 2005

Mr. NORWOOD introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To require a study and report regarding the construction and designation of a new Interstate from Augusta, Georgia to Natchez, Mississippi.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “14th/14 Amendment
5 Interstate Highway Initiation Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL FINDING.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The 11-State region in the Southeast that
9 has been known historically as the Southern Black
10 Belt is in need of the same regional economic devel-

1 opment plans in 2005 as those modeled by the Ap-
2 palachian Regional Commission in 1965.

3 (2) The Southern Black Belt has an African-
4 American population that is double the national av-
5 erage, due to historic population concentrations dat-
6 ing to the pre-emancipation period. It was largely
7 with the protection and economic advancement of
8 the residents of this region in mind that Congress
9 passed and the states ratified the 14th Amendment
10 to the U.S. Constitution in 1868, guaranteeing equal
11 rights to all persons in the United States, including
12 those formerly held in involuntary servitude.

13 (3) This region and its residents, particularly
14 the descendants of freed slaves, suffer from high un-
15 employment, low incomes, low education levels, poor
16 health, and high infant mortality. Congress recog-
17 nizes the studies, findings, and recommendations on
18 these problems of the Southern Black Belt by the
19 University of Georgia, Tuskegee Institute, North
20 Carolina State University, and the University of
21 Kentucky.

22 (4) Disparity in transportation infrastructure
23 investment has been a key contributing factor to the
24 persistent poverty and social ills of this region. The
25 lack of adequate east-west Interstate highway access

1 has provided a significant impediment to travel
2 throughout the region, served as a severe obstacle to
3 the attraction of industry and jobs, and has been a
4 detriment to public health and transportation safety.

5 (5) Congress hereby resolves that a new Inter-
6 state Highway designated “United States Interstate
7 Route 14” should be built through the heart of the
8 Southern Black Belt, linking Augusta, Georgia to
9 Natchez, Mississippi, following a route generally de-
10 fined through Macon and Columbus, Georgia; Mont-
11 gomery, Alabama; and Laurel and Natchez, Mis-
12 sissippi.

13 (6) In light of the promise of economic parity
14 made by the nation to this region in the 14th
15 Amendment, this new interstate highway should be
16 named the “14th Amendment Highway”.

17 **SEC. 3. STUDY AND REPORT.**

18 Not later than December 31, 2005, the Secretary of
19 Transportation shall study and report to the appropriate
20 committees of Congress regarding the steps and estimated
21 funding necessary to designate and construct a new inter-
22 state route (Interstate Route I–14) for the 14th Amend-
23 ment Highway, from Augusta, Georgia to Natchez, Mis-

- 1 Mississippi (formerly designated the Fall Line Freeway within
- 2 the State of Georgia).

